



THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION
DEVOTED TO BORDER HISTORY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 28.

Price, Five Cents.



"HAVE NO FEAR, MISS, WHIRLWIND WILL STEADILY DROP THEM BEHIND, AND NOT FEEL HIS DOUBLE LOAD," SAID BUFFALO BILL, WITH CONFIDENCE.—(CHAPTER CXVII.)



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No. 28.

NEW YORK, November 23, 1901.

Price Five Cents.

BUFFALO BILL'S VICTORIES.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

CHAPTER CIX.

THE ALARM.

In the shelter of a clump of timber, located like a solitary island of the sea, for it was surrounded by a vast spreading plain in the land of the far West, a group of bordermen were sitting about a campfire.

Smoking after the evening meal, and spinning campfire yarns, they appeared mindful of danger until one of their number suddenly sprang to his feet and with a few bounds reached his horse, saddled and feeding near, and shot out from the timber at full speed.

"In Heaven's name! Is the man mad?" cried one of the number, leaping to his feet.

"No, pard, Buffalo Bill hain't mad, but somethin' has told him of danger we didn't see nor hear."

"Better get ready fer business, I tell you," answered Little Yankee, one of the number, gazing

after the flying horseman, while, aroused by his words, a number of men sprang up from their blankets and turned their eyes out across the moonlit prairie.

"I'll follow Buffalo Bill, for he shall play no lone hand in a game of danger, if I can help it," cried Reckless Bob, an old plainsman, while another, known as Bowie Dave, called out:

"And I'm yer partner, Bob, fer Buffalo Bill is ther boss o' this sunset land, and would risk his scalp any time fer a comrade."

A chorus of voices showed that Bowie Dave had uttered the sentiments of all, while loud rang out from Little Yankee the cry:

"Great God! look yonder!"

All eyes turned in the direction in which his hand was pointing, and in a chorus of voices came the words:

"The Prairie Ghost! the Prairie Ghost!"

Every eye was riveted upon the strange, weird, spectre-like forms of a horse and rider, and which was first seen by Buffalo Bill, who had at once started in chase.

The moonlight revealed far out upon the prairie a white horse with what appeared to be a shrouded rider, so ghastly-looking as to indeed seem to be not of life, but of ghostly creation.

"It's ther Prairie Ghost, and I wants no spooks," said one.

"I hain't chasin' no graveyard sperits," another remarked.

"It's death ter follow a ghost."

"Fightin' an' bullets don't count agin' 'em."

"It's a gal's ghost, an' when a gal tarns ghost an' smells o' graveyards, I hain't runnin' arter them."

"Trot out yer live folks, paleface or Injun, an' I'll make ghost of 'em, but then I is done."

So the comments ran around the camp, but no one seemed anxious to pursue the weird horse and rider until Little Yankee called out:

"She don't scare Buffalo Bill a little bit, pards."

"There he goes in full chase!"

All eyes now saw some hundred yards in the rear of the ghastly-looking horse and rider the dark forms of Buffalo Bill and his steed in full chase.

"Body or sperits, Buffalo Bill is arter her."

"You bet ef a devil can't scare him, no angil kin, whether in petticoat or shroud."

"He ain't one of the skeery kind."

"Lordy! but Bill hes made more ghosts then any men I knows."

"Yas, but fought 'em square in ther flesh an' bone, and scared 'em out from hantin' him when they jined ther graveyard band."

Others then had something to say, while still more were silent, gazing with a strange feeling of unrest

after the "Prairie Ghost," and Buffalo Bill, their leader, in hot pursuit.

That the scout chief was urging his horse hard was evident, and yet he did not seem to gain upon the spectre steed.

As the pursued and pursuer grew dim in the distance, a sigh of relief came from all in the timber, traders, guards and teamsters alike.

The Prairie Ghost had already been the talk of the campfires, and now when the phantom became visible to their own eyes, a feeling of dread, of awe, was upon them.

But there was one exception in the group.

That one was Reckless Bob.

He had been busy bridling and saddling his horse, and Bowie Dave called out:

"Since yer dun see the Prairie Ghost an' her warin' grave garmin'ts, yer hain't goin' now, is yer, Reckless Bob?"

"You do not know me, Dave, if you think I fear the living or the dead, man or devil, where a pard needs help," was the answer, and with the words he leaped into his saddle and dashed away across the prairie.

But as Buffalo Bill went alone in chase of the Prairie Ghost, so did Reckless Bob go alone upon the trail of his pard.

At that time Buffalo Bill, noted as the best guide on the plains, was generally known as the Pilot of the Prairies, and those who knew him best were wont to speak of him as Prairie Pilot, a name that still clings to him along with "Border King," "Prairie Prince," "King of Scouts," and others that he has won by his daring deeds.

Though willing to fight six times their number in redskins, meet the attacks of outlaws in large force, and face all hardships and dangers, the outfit camped

there in the timber island, as superstitious as sailors, would not go in chase of what they deemed a spook.

Reckless Bob, carrying out his name won for utter recklessness, was the sole exception.

When Buffalo Bill went he felt that he could follow, especially as the daring scout might need aid, even though the Prairie Ghost appeared to be of a spooky character.

At the full speed of his horse, therefore, Reckless Bob pursued the scout, who, in turn, was riding desperately hard to overtake the weird steed and rider of which he was in chase.

CHAPTER CX.

THE "PRAIRIE GHOST."

"Come, Redskin, you must mend your pace or yonder fleet animal will run you out of sight," cried Buffalo Bill, the Prairie Pilot, and encouraged by his master's voice, the noble steed bounded forward with renewed exertion, and steadily began to gain upon the spook-like horse and rider.

Presently the white form turned and glanced behind, as though hearing the nearer approach of the pursuer, and at once a ghostly-looking arm was seen to rise and fall in quick succession several times, and the sound of a sharp blow each time reached the ears of the scout, who exclaimed:

"Redskin, you are driving the phantom hard. On, on, old fellow, and we will solve the mystery!"

With tremulous exertions, both steeds then rushed on, at an almost incredible pace, and Reckless Rob, nearly a mile in their rear, felt that he was being distanced, although his horse was remarkably swift and possessed good bottom.

In vain did the flying, snow-white steed strain every muscle. Sharp and quick fell the blows of the whip to urge him on; but to no avail, for Redskin's blood was up, and the cruel spur was kept constantly

urging him on. The scout felt that the game was in his own hands, and a gleam of pleasure flashed in his dark eyes, for he felt that he was about to solve the mystery of that so-called spectre horse and rider, which, for three years had eluded all pursuit, and had become a terror upon the prairies.

Who or what it could be, none knew; but certain it was that when a party of scouts or hunters, a wagon train or settlement on the border, beheld the weird horse and rider, ruin and bloodshed were sure to follow, until the apparition had been called the Ghost-Shadower, ever dodging the steps of those where booty was to be gained.

Regarding the strange steed and rider, Buffalo Bill had had his own views, which he kept to himself, and twice before he had seen and chased the apparition but without result in his favor, as he was not then mounted upon his matchless Redskin, the fleetest steed on the plains.

Now it was different, for his horse was in superb condition, and he determined to overtake the fugitive if he drove his own noble animal to death.

True, he could have ended the chase sooner, perhaps, by resorting to his rifle; but he would not fire upon a woman. No, he must depend upon Redskin.

And nobly did the fleet animal respond to his master's urging, and foot by foot drew nearer the chase, until only a score of lengths separated them.

Then, suddenly, the white steed went down, and his rider was thrown thirty feet in front, and lay white and motionless, as though dead, while the animal sprang nimbly to his feet, unhurt by his fall on the soft prairie sward.

With an iron hand, Buffalo Bill drew Redskin back upon his haunches, and, springing to the ground, rushed to the side of the fallen rider.

"Yes, it is a woman—nay, a mere girl. I hope she

is not dead," he cried, earnestly, at the same time laying his hand over her head.

"No, she is merely stunned; I can soon revive her," and unslinging his canteen from his saddle he began to bathe her face and hands, at the same time gazing in admiration upon her.

"How beautiful she is, and scarcely over sixteen! Who can she be?"

Indeed she was beautiful, with her wealth of brown hair, and graceful, delicate form, clad in a robe of pure white, worn loose and flowing, as if the better to keep up the weird character she played.

The face was lovely, bronzed by exposure, and her head was encircled by a white veil of lightest material.

A moment or two the scout rubbed her hands briskly, and bathed her face; then the eyes slowly opened and rested with a stare upon the man who bent over her.

"You have run me down, sir, at last," she said, in a stern voice for a girl, and in a tone of sarcasm.

"I regret your fall, miss. I hope you are not hurt."

"I was merely stunned—ha! there is Spectre, and unhurt," and rising quickly, she called to her steed, which, with a low neigh, trotted to her side.

Gently she patted the faithful animal, and then abruptly turning to the man before her, she said:

"Who are you, sir?"

"Men call me Buffalo Bill," quietly responded the scout.

The girl started, her face flushed in the bright moonlight, and her lustrous dark-blue eyes turned full upon her captor, and there was admiration in the glance.

From the handsome man before her, the maiden's eyes turned upon the splendid animal, quietly cropping the short prairie grass, and patiently awaiting his master. A finer steed she never saw, with his

long, gaunt body, muscular limbs, glossy red hide, arching neck and small head.

Brightly glittered the moonlight upon the silver bespangled Mexican saddle and bridle, and the young girl observed that the rifle, revolvers and knife of the scout were mounted with the same precious metal.

Often before she had heard of Buffalo Bill, she knew that men called him the Prairie Pilot, scout, guide and hunter, and in an encounter those who knew him shunned him.

"I have heard of the man they call Prairie Pilot. I feel my capture less keenly, when I know who it is that has taken me," said the young girl, after a quick but careful scrutiny of horse and rider.

"You are complimentary, miss; but may I ask who my fair prisoner is?"

"Like yourself, I have a name given me on the plains; I am called the Spectre Spy."

"That I knew. It was to solve the mystery of your masquerade I followed you."

"And now that you have run me down, what is your intention regarding me?"

"To release you, upon one condition——"

"And that is——"

"I have noticed that after you are discovered upon the trail of a train, a band of robbers, under the lead of the Ranger Chief, invariably makes an attack. Are you their spy?"

"You had a condition, I believe, for my release," evasively replied the girl.

"Yes; promise me that you will not report the train from which I chased you, and you shall go free."

"If I refuse to promise—what then?"

"I will see that you do not, by retaining you as a prisoner."

"I will promise you in good faith."

"Very well. Can I aid you to mount?"

"No," and with a bound the girl was on the back of her steed, when she continued:

"I thank you, Buffalo Bill, and before I go I would give you a word of warning: Keep away from yonder range of hills, for men live there who seek your life."

"I know it; there dwells the Ranger Chief and his band."

"Then heed my warning. Farewell."

With a word to her steed, the animal bounded away, heading in the direction of a range of hills, some six miles distant, and behind which the moon was slowly sinking from sight, and leaving the prairie in gloom and darkness, with Buffalo Bill standing erect and motionless, gazing after the rapidly receding form of the weird-looking horse and rider.

CHAPTER CXI.

RECKLESS ROB.

Morning broke over the prairie, the encampment was astir, and Little Yankee eagerly scanned the landscape for some sign of Buffalo Bill.

But nothing was visible, far or near, and preparations for breakfast were carried briskly on, for it was the intention of the traders to push rapidly ahead under the guidance of Little Yankee and Bowie Dave, though they greatly regretted the absence of Prairie Pilot and his right-hand man, Rob.

Suddenly Dave uttered a cry of pleasure, and over a roll of the prairie were visible two horsemen approaching the motte at a rapid gallop.

"The Pilot and Rob," cried several voices.

"Hold on, fellers; you is only half right. Yes, yonder comes Reckless Rob, but it ain't the Pilot with him, but another feller; an' he's a prizner, too, or my name ain't Sloan."

The truth of Little Yankee's remark was at once

evident, for one of the riders was recognized now by all as Rob, while the other was a much smaller man than the scout, and had a short black beard, while his hands seemed tied behind him, and his horse was led by the other.

A few moments more and the two horsemen darted up and were welcomed with a loud shout, to which Rob responded with a wild warwhoop that made the echoes ring through the timber.

"Well, ole hoss, what hev ye to tell us?" cried Dave, eagerly.

"Considerable, comrades; but, first, take this robber and tie him to yonder tree, until we have time to sit on his case," and then changing his manner into the frontier way of speaking which he often used, Rob continued:

"Yer see, I follered close onto the trail of the Spectre and the Pilot—as close as I cud; but the'r hosses fairly flew, an' I was left a long way behind; but I prest the trail hard, and arter an hour came up with traces of a tumble, so I got down an' s'arched the ground, and bless yer, I see'd whar the Phantom's hoss had pitched into a prairie dog hole and tossed his rider a long way ahead.

"Wall here is whar Buffalo Bill overhauled the spectre, for ther' was marks all round, and then the trail of the white hoss branched off toward the hills, and arter considerable trouble I found whar the Pilot had circled round and ag'in struck the trail and followed it.

"Wall, I prest on, too, an' arter a while the moon went down an' I couldn't see the trail, but I went on, an' suddenly heard a pistol shot, an' then another, an' then one of the Pilot's warcries.

"Then, you bet I made ole Iron Heart git over the grass, an' I was a-dashin' ter the timber, when I run inter that thar varmint ag'in the tree.

"Wall, we clinched, an' arter a tumble to ther

ground an' a long tussle, I choked him still, an' tied him; then I caught his hoss an' waited fer him to come to his senses.

"I hadn't long to wait, an' by some pointed argument with my bowie I got out of ther feller that the Pilot had gone on inter the hills, with more company than he wanted jist then.

"So I concluded to jest make this feller come back to camp with me, an' when day broke I recognized him as the very devil who kilt Abe Homer two years ago, an' was sentenced to be hung, but got away; but he can't git away now," and Reckless Rob spoke with bitter determination.

"Does yer believe the Pilot's passed in his checks, Rob?" asked Little Yankee, very seriously.

"I don't know what to think; but I'm goin' to find out."

"How so, pard?"

"Why, as soon as we try and hang yonder villain you had better press on with the train to the posts. I am going to return to the hills and look up the pilot."

"It's mighty risky, Rob."

"Yes, but Buffalo Bill would do the same for me, or you, or any one in need of help. I'm going, boys, if I go under."

"Wall, I know yer, Rob, so I won't argue to turn yer back from yer purpus; but I hates to see yer go alone," said Yankee.

"An' so does I, pard," put in Dave.

"Anyhow," he continued, "we'll run ther train on to ther posts, an' ef yer don't put in an appearance soon arter, we'll return with some boys an' look yer up, or git some ha'r."

"Thank you, my friend," replied Rob, again resuming his natural way of speaking; "thank you. Now let us to work and try this fellow, whom I recognize as the murderer of Abe Homer——"

"And I know him as one of the band of the Ranger Chief, who two years ago attacked a train I was driving in, and plundered it, after killing a dozen good fellows and wounding me; but I got away from the devils," said a tall teamster, approaching, whip in hand.

All eyes were at once turned upon the prisoner, whose face was the index of his evil heart, and at once it was decided that he should be hanged, and that immediately.

In vain was it that Rob questioned the robber, regarding the fate of Buffalo Bill, and of the whereabouts of the band; he would answer nothing—only begged piteously for his life.

But he begged for mercy to those who felt no mercy, for the band of the Ranger Chief had for years been the terror of the border, and they were determined to make an example of the prisoner then in their power.

Amid the piteous cries of the doomed wretch a rope was quickly thrown over the limb of a tree, and the noose fitted around the neck of the struggling wretch.

"Hoist him up!" was the stern order from Rob, and a dozen men, who held the other end of the rope, quickly drew him into the air.

The end of the rope was then made fast, and quickly the train was in motion, filing out across the prairie, and leaving the timber island alone with its ghastly spectacle. A short distance from the motte Reckless Rob bade his companions farewell, and, amid a shower of good wishes for luck, branched off upon the trail of the Prairie Pilot, Buffalo Bill.

CHAPTER CXII.

CAPTURED.

After a ride of some moments on the trail of the Spectre Spy, Buffalo Bill changed his course, going

parallel with the hills for some distance, and riding slowly, while he cautiously scanned the ground by the lingering light of the moon.

Then he came to a halt, dismounted and said, in a low tone:

"Down, Redskin!"

Instantly the intelligent animal dropped upon the ground and lay flat upon his side, the scout also throwing himself at full length upon the prairie.

Not long had he been in his recumbent position when there was heard the sound of hoof strokes, and soon after the white horse and fair rider appeared in sight, riding in an easy canter toward the hills.

Without observing the scout and his horse, the maiden passed by within thirty yards of them, when a neigh from Spectre caused her to quicken her pace, as though her flight and capture had made her nervous of danger.

Hardly had she been lost sight of in the gloom when a word brought Redskin again upon his feet, and, mounting in haste, he set out on the trail of the strange girl.

Keeping the white form just in sight, and knowing that he was invisible to her, in his dark clothes, Buffalo Bill continued on until the darkness grew deeper and deeper as they drew nearer the shadow of the hills, which now loomed boldly up, not half a mile distant.

As though perfectly acquainted with the surroundings, the maiden directed her course to the left, toward a bold and rugged hill, which terminated so abruptly upon the prairie that it formed a cliff.

Around the base of this precipitous hill the ghostly horse and rider wound, and were lost to the sight of the scout.

"It is certain that I cannot follow her further to-night without making my presence known, so I had better go into camp in the foothills until the morn-

ing, and then strike her trail, for I am determined to track out this den of robbers."

So saying, the scout rode in under the shadow of the hill, and finding a suitable and secluded gulch in which to camp, he dismounted, and leaving the faithful Redskin standing patiently awaiting, he moved around cautiously in search of some spot to make his bed.

He succeeded in finding a place, and was spreading his blanket when there came a whirr through the air, a blow upon his head and he was hurled backward several paces, his arms pinioned to his side by the noose of a lasso.

Though thus taken at a disadvantage, Buffalo Bill managed to get his hand upon his revolver, and a tall form, rushing toward him, fell dead, shot through the heart by the scout.

But before he could free himself from the noose, strong as he was, there flashed forth two shots from the dark underbrush, and the scout staggered back and fell his full length upon the ground, while with discordant yells half-a-dozen dark forms bounded out from the covert that had concealed them.

Their sudden rush startled Redskin, who, doubtless seeing that he could render his master no service, turned quickly and, with a wild neigh, dashed away in the direction in which he had come.

But the scout had not been killed by the shot, only stunned momentarily by the bullet grazing his temple, and as his assailants rushed upon him, they found that they had caught a Tartar, and only by their united strength, and by a most desperate struggle, were they enabled to securely bind their formidable prisoner.

A fire built in the meantime blazed up brightly, and Buffalo Bill found himself the prisoner of half a score of as hard a looking set of villains as he had ever seen on the border.

A closer scrutiny of them, and he knew that he was in the hands of the robber band of the Ranger Chief, and that no mercy would be shown him he well knew, for often had he trailed one of the Bandit Brotherhood to his death, and fearlessly waged war against the bold renegades who spread terror along the frontier.

Presently a horseman rode up to the spot, and after a few words with several of the men, dismounted and approached the scout.

He was a man of striking appearance, clad in a suit consisting of buckskin leggins, top boots, a military coat, and Mexican sombrero, while he wore a sword, and a pair of revolvers in his belt.

His face was a striking one, with its bronzed skin, dark hair and mustache, and bright eyes; though there was a certain bold and reckless look stamped upon every feature.

His hair was worn long, and his mustache was curled up at either end, while his whole "make-up" was that of a border dude.

He seemed scarcely more than twenty years of age, and was well-mounted upon a dark bay mustang, large, wiry and vicious looking.

Buffalo Bill had before seen the man, and in several engagements had endeavored to cut short his career of crime, but Satan seemed to always look after his own, and the young bandit leader had escaped.

In this man the scout recognized the field chief of the bandits, Captain Rudolph, the lieutenant of the Ranger Chief.

"Are you not the man they call Buffalo Bill?" asked Captain Rudolph.

"I am; are you not the man they call *Captain Rudolph*, the murderer and horse thief?" coolly replied the scout.

"Hold, Sir Scout, or I will cut you down where you stand," angrily cried the young bandit.

"Cutting throats is your trade."

"Do you dare me, and in my power, fellow?"

"You dare not unbind me and meet me as man to man, although men say you are no coward," sneeringly returned the scout.

For an instant, Captain Rudolph seemed about to strike the scout; but then, as if changing his mind, he said, quietly:

"Your pluck will be tried, sir, ere the Ranger Chief is done with you. Come, boys; lead him on to the stronghold, but blindfold him first. I suppose it would be useless to attempt to capture his horse. I would give a cool thousand for that animal."

"No, Captain Rudolph, there are not horses enough in the band to run that steed down. Shall we take the prisoner at once to the chief?" asked one of the men, who seemed to be an under officer.

"No; father is not at all well, and I do not wish to disturb him. Put the prisoner in the cliff cave."

So saying, Captain Rudolph rode away, and a few moments after Buffalo Bill was blindfolded, and then mounted upon a mustang, after which the party set off on a trail leading still further into the range of the hills.

The position chosen by the wary old chief of the bandits for a stronghold was certainly a desirable one, for it was under the shelter of a mountain, and upon a level plain, comprising half a hundred acres.

From this plain, where were built the log huts of the band, a narrow and steep pathway led down into a fertile valley half a mile below where were herded the horses and cattle stolen from the settlements, and which, at a moment's warning of approaching danger, could be driven into the pens on the hillside above.

Through the plateau ran a considerable mountain

stream, which formed a fall, and plunged into the valley below, the roar of the waters being audible for miles away.

The cliff or mountain which protected the camp on the north, rose to a height of three hundred feet, and in bygone times some convulsion of nature had split it in twain, leaving a chasm not more than twenty feet wide, running back through the hill for half a mile.

Large pieces of rock had fallen down into this chasm, and becoming wedged there near the bottom, formed a kind of tunnel or cave, which led back through the hill into the valley beyond, and formed thereby a means of escape for the bandits should their camp be attacked and carried.

Having no use for this tunnel, unless in case of retreat, the bandits had turned the cave into a storehouse for their plunder, and a prison for their captives.

Into this place, in one of the small caves, Buffalo Bill was taken, and by the light of a torch he saw that there was a rude cot there, with a blanket upon it.

Worn out, he threw himself upon the cot; and after removing his bonds and placing irons upon his feet, which were connected with a chain leading through a fissure in the rocks, his guards left him to his melancholy reflections.

CHAPTER CXIII.

THE CAPTIVES OF THE RANGER CHIEF.

As soon as he was alone Buffalo Bill at once set about some plan of escape, but soon realizing that was impossible he gave it up, for the present, and threw himself down to rest.

When he awoke it was broad daylight, and glancing around him he at once realized his perilous situation.

But he had only a moment for reflection, before a form darkened the entrance to the cavern, and a man stood before him.

At a glance the scout saw that he was a German, and his remarkable costume brought a smile to the captive's face, and no wonder, for the soldier, the Indian, the Mexican, hunter and citizen had contributed to the wardrobe.

"Vell, vat you laff, mine frint? Ish it so funny to have to die, dot you feel goot?"

"Oh, no, Dutchy; but you have no objection to my smiling, and who could help it, when looking at you?"

"Vell, mine Gott in himmel, vat ish de matter mit mineself dat you laff?" angrily replied the German.

"Do not let your angry passions rise, my bandit scarecrow, but give me the breakfast I see you have brought me."

"It is petter ash vat I should give yer," replied the German, setting down a platter upon which was a tin cup of coffee, some bread and jerked buffalo meat.

"I am glad to hear it, Dutchy. But we will not quarrel, for I want you for a partner in a little enterprise in which there is gold to be made."

The German held up his finger in warning, and with a ludicrously knowing look and wink, turned and left the cave.

With a relish, the scout dispatched his breakfast, and then walked as far as his chain would allow him, toward the entrance of the cavern.

From his position he could see the steep wall of the chasm rising hundreds of feet above him, and their summit crowned with a growth of small trees.

"If I only had some friend to aid me I could soon get out of this. Perhaps I can trust the Dutchman—ha—ha!"

The scout suddenly started and seemed all attention, for a strange sound reached his ear, a strange sound for that lonely cavern and bandit camp.

The sound was that of voices—not the voices of rude men, but the soft tones of women.

Approaching cautiously the crevice through which the sound came, the scout heard a voice in conversation he at once recognized as that of the Spectre Spy.

Listening attentively, he heard her say:

"I think, lady, there is a better chance now of your escape than before, for though I could have trusted Dutch, he is not quick-witted enough for the danger he would have had to meet."

"Then you have some one you can trust more fully?" asked a sad, sweet voice.

"Yes, and it is accident that he is here. Had he taken my warning he would not now have been in his present deadly peril."

"He is in danger, then?"

"Yes, fearful danger, for he is a prisoner, and I know that my father will have him shot, for he has done our band much harm."

"To whom do you refer?" asked the same sweet voice.

"To one whom men call Buffalo Bill, the Prairie Pilot, one of the most daring scouts on the frontier."

"I have heard of him at the fort, and also in the settlement. He seems to be greatly admired by the soldiers and settlers and feared by the Indians and renegades."

"Yes, and they have cause to fear him, for he is a deadly foe. Last night, lady, he captured me on the prairie, and nobly released me, on condition that I would not let the band know where his train was.

"I promised; he believed me and let me go! But, although I warned him away from these hills he must have struck my trail and followed me, coming

right into an ambush of our men, placed as an outer guard.

"He was captured after killing one of our men, and fighting bravely, and is now a prisoner, confined in a cave near this, awaiting the recovery of my father, the Ranger Chief, who will certainly condemn him to death."

"Poor man; how sincerely do I feel for him."

"God bless her!" ejaculated the scout, and then he continued: "Eavesdroppers do sometimes hear good of themselves as well as evil."

"Yes, but I am determined that he shall not die if I can help it," resolutely responded the Spectre Spy.

"You are a noble girl. How I wish I could take you away from this awful bandit camp."

"Lady, all I love in the world are here. I have no other home than these wild hills, no other companions than these reckless, cruel men around me, and whose deeds I loathe. Did I not loathe them, I would not now endeavor to restore you to those who love you."

"I believe you, kind girl; but, my poor father, how he must suffer to be in ignorance of my fate and believe me dead."

"You shall soon be free, if I can make you so, lady; so cheer up and eat the breakfast I have brought you. This afternoon my father wishes to see you, to question you regarding the movements of the soldiers. I will conduct you to him, and I beg that you will not anger him with your proud spirit."

"I will try to do as you wish, and your words give me hope that ere long I may escape; but please do not leave Buffalo Bill to his fate."

"Trust me, lady," replied the Spectre Spy, and the scout heard her walk away, and feeling that his fellow captive was alone he determined in some way to communicate with her.

Carefully examining the crevices in the wall of

rock, Buffalo Bill was enabled to find one that looked into the adjoining cavern.

The first thing that he observed was the generally comfortable appearance of the little cave, for it had a carpet on the rock floor, a chair, a table, upon which was the remnant of a good breakfast, and a cot, with some pretensions to neatness and comfort.

Upon the side of the cot sat the occupant—a maiden of perhaps eighteen.

Her form was clothed in a close-fitting riding habit of dark-gray cloth, and there were elegance and grace about her.

Presently a wealth of golden hair was thrown back, the bowed head was raised, and the scout beheld the lovely face, and large blue eyes gazing sadly and wistfully out into the daylight at the mouth of the cave.

"Lady!"

The tones of the scout were soft and kind; but they startled the maiden, and she sprang to her feet.

"I am here; like yourself, I am a prisoner——"

"Indeed! Yes, I see where your voice comes from now. Are you the Prairie Pilot, also known as Buffalo Bill?" said the maiden in cautious tones.

"So men call me. A short while since I overheard your conversation with the young girl who visited you. When she returns beg her to visit my cavern, and perhaps we can arrange some plan of escape together. Now I cannot say more, but keep up a brave heart and all will come out well."

CHAPTER CXIV.

ONE CHANCE IN A THOUSAND.

Buffalo Bill lay upon the rocks in thought until he heard a step approaching.

It was the German he had seen in the morning.

"Well, Dutchy, I am hungry."

"Vell, I hash some goot dinner for you, mine

frint; te young miss she cook it mit her own pooty fingers."

"Indeed! The young lady is the daughter of the Ranger Chief, is she not?"

"Dot ish so, an' her brother, Captain Rudolph, ish te son mit te ole man."

"Captain Rudolph is her brother?"

"Yas; he ish te tuyvil, but she pe an angel gal."

"She is a fine girl, Dutchy; but, tell me, what are they going to do with me?"

"Hang you mit te neck."

"When?" and the scout spoke with perfect calmness.

"Mine Gott! vot, you no scared?"

"A threatened man lives long, Dutchy; but when am I to be hung?"

"As soon as te Ranger Chief say so; but I must go away now; I see you to-morrow."

The scout made no reply, and the German walked away, Buffalo Bill making no effort to detain him, for he had made a discovery that deeply interested him.

As he lay in the mouth of the cavern, his eyes ever and anon glancing toward the ribbon of blue sky above, suddenly caught sight of a human face peering cautiously down into the chasm.

Narrowly watching it, he soon saw the form of a man come into full view, and he almost gave vent to one of his wild, ringing wacries, for he recognized in the cautious stranger none other than Reckless Rob.

Ere he could discover whether Rob had seen him or not, there came the sound of footsteps, and the two maidens returned, the eyes of the captive being red with tears, for she had just had a stormy interview with the chief, who told her it was his intention to hold her a prisoner until her father, Colonel Clifton, paid a heavy ransom for her.

Rose Clifton knew that her father was not a rich man, and that if he paid the sum demanded, it would beggar him, and she appealed to the mercy of the old chief, who, an invalid, reclined upon his cot in one of the rooms of his cabin, and kept his fierce eyes constantly upon the face of the maiden.

"Girl, what is your name? Tell me that, and I will know whether your father is wealthy enough to pay my price, for I know the limit of every settler's and officer's purse on this border."

"My name I decline to give you, sir; but you will find my father able to resent most bitterly the insult of his daughter's capture," proudly replied Rose Clifton.

"Nonsense; my men captured you within a mile of the settlement. You should not have ventured so far on horseback, girl, without company; but I have you now and I intend to make money out of your capture."

"Is there no hope for me, sir? At the fort are two of your men, condemned to death. Will you exchange me for them?"

"Curse the men! What care I for them? If they die, there are others to fill their places.

"There are soldiers on this frontier, girl, and scouts, and settlers, and Indians; but I, the Ranger Chief, am ruler, and this whole border shall find it so.

"Theo, take the maiden back, and to-morrow I will send out spies to find out who she is."

The Ranger Chief waved his hand, and his daughter, whom he had addressed as Theo, turned silently and sadly away, leading Rose Clifton with her, back to her lonely prison.

When away from the presence of the chief the proud spirit of Rose broke down and she burst into tears; but the fair bandit cheered her all in her power, and when they reached the spot where the

scout lay, his untasted supper by his side, she had gained her usual composure.

"I trust your visit to the chief has resulted in good to you, lady," quietly said the scout.

"No, sir; he demands a ransom impossible for my father to pay; but this noble young girl bids me hope."

"Yes, there is hope for you; but I must leave you now; and lady, you need not return immediately to your cave. If not to-night, I will see you to-morrow."

With a wave of her hand, the young girl walked rapidly away, leaving Rose still standing near the spot where the scout lay at full length, his eyes gazing earnestly toward the summit of the chasm.

After the departure of the Spectre Spy, the scout said, quietly:

"The daughter of the old Ranger Chief seems inclined to aid us, but I would rather not have her do so, for two reasons——"

"And those are——" asked Rose Clifton.

"First, it will be at great risk to herself, if she aid us, and second, I desire to wage a bitter war against this band, and do not wish to feel that I owe a kindness to the chief's daughter that must stay my hand."

"How noble she seems, to have for her companions a band of robbers. What terrible fate led her to such a life?" asked Rose, feelingly.

"I know not, and it is a sad thing that she has, in father and brother, chiefs of a band of outlaws. Strange as it seems, I feel that I have met her brother and herself before, but where my memory fails me. Their faces haunt me with some memory of the past. Were I to see their father, perhaps I could then recall all; but the Ranger Chief has been the ruler of his band only, his young son being the leader in all their raids and deadly encounters.

"Who or what they are, none know, but certain it is the outlaws are held well in hand, and never have I known an instance of where one, even with promise of his life, ever betrayed the brotherhood."

Deeply interested in the words of the scout, Rose listened attentively, and then said:

"I have now met the father and daughter, and a remarkable pair they are. The son I have never seen but, sir, if you do not accept aid from the maiden, how can you manage to escape?"

"I will take the chances without her. Lady, see there!" and the scout pointed far up the chasm wall to where was visible Reckless Rob, quietly seated in the shelter of a niche in the rocks.

"A guard of the bandits. Perhaps I'd better not linger here——"

"No, it is Reckless Rob, the best friend I have in the world. He has struck my trail and followed me here—to rescue me."

"Alone?"

"Doubtless. I know of none who would have dared to come with him—at least, any that he could have found thus soon. See! he has thrown something down to me. Will you pick it up, please, lady, for I am in irons, you see?"

Quickly Rose stepped forward, and took up the object that had fallen from above—a piece of paper wrapped around a small stone.

Taking it, the scout read aloud, written in lead pencil, in a bold, legible hand:

"A greeting to you from above, old fellow; sorry to see you in durance vile, but glad to see you are not in the land of silence.

"I arrived this afternoon, having trailed you, and by a flank movement reached my present position.

"The train has made tracks for the posts, under the guidance of Little Yankee.

"I have discovered that the rear end of this chasm is guarded by two sentinels—there must be a tunnel

through, as they could never have reached their present stand without a day's journey around.

"Find out the cave if you can; at dark, I will move on the two guards, and you shall be free.

"I met a party of soldiers on the prairie looking for the daughter of Colonel Clifton, the new commandant of the upper posts.

"By the description given me of her, I recognize her in the lady near you.

"Your position shows you to be in irons, so when it is dark I will lower you a file and one of my pistols, and then you must press on through the cave to the outer entrance.

"If I discover anything of importance, will communicate again.

ROB."

"He certainly is a true friend, and a brave man," said Rose, when the scout had read all.

"None truer or braver, Miss Clifton, for such, I believe, is your name?"

"Yes, sir, my father arrived at his new command only a week ago, and it was while riding to the settlement, half a mile from the fort, to see an old schoolmate, that I was captured, when little dreaming of danger," replied the maiden.

Hearing an approaching footstep, Rose rapidly ran into her cave, and the scout was alone.

A moment after Theo, the girl spy, appeared, and said, pleasantly:

"Though you put your own head into the noose, Buffalo Bill, I do not intend to let it remain there; but I cannot act to-night, as the whole band are at present in the stronghold.

"To-morrow at daylight my brother goes off on a raid with his men, and you will be allowed to live until his return, when, if you do not accept the terms offered you, you have to die."

"There is dishonor in those terms, doubtless?"

"Yes; but life is sweet."

The scout smiled and remained silent, and the girl continued:

"When my brother has gone I can act with less

fear of detection; to-night I can do nothing; but, as I had an opportunity to rescue from my father's room your belt of arms, I did so. I will leave them in the care of the lady in the next cave."

Buffalo Bill's eyes fairly flashed with delight as Theo threw back a serape which hung from her shoulders, and displayed his unerring rifle and belt, containing his revolvers, knife and cartridge pouches; but he said, quietly:

"I thank you from my heart, fair girl; you have done me a kindness I shall one day reciprocate."

"I do not wish to see a brave man die like a dog," responded the fair spy as she walked away and disappeared in the cavern which was the prison of Rose Clifton.

A moment after the young girl again passed the scout, and was soon lost to sight in the gloom, for night was coming on apace and darkness already filled the chasm.

But, far up, outlined against the bright sky, still tinged with the sunset, stood Reckless Rob, his eagle eye watching every move of his enemies, and taking in every chance in his favor.

An hour passed and darkness rested upon all; but the quick ear of Buffalo Bill caught a sound which he seemed at once to recognize, for he called in a low tone to Rose, who, the next moment, stood by his side.

"Miss Clifton, I heard a sound against the wall yonder; will you kindly see if Reckless Rob has not lowered us his promised aid?"

Rose went to the other side of the chasm, and feeling in the darkness, her hand soon touched a small string, bearing a weight on the end.

A moment after she held in her hand a pistol and a file, and unloosing them, she found also a slip of paper.

These she bore to the scout; but he cried, quickly:

"Back to your cave! Quick!"

Not a moment too soon did Rose escape, for the next moment a flickering light was seen, and two men approached, bearing a lantern.

Turning it full upon the recumbent scout, the man who held the lantern said, harshly:

"You prefer to lie on hard rocks to your cot, do you?"

"A man who is condemned to die wishes to breathe all the pure air he can," quickly responded the scout.

"You take it coolly," responded the other man.

"My conscience is not blackened, as is yours, with crimes of robbery and murder."

"Go on, my hearty; you can have your say!"

"Come, Gabe, let us see if the girl is all safe, and then go and relieve the boys," said the first speaker, and they moved on to the next cave.

Flashing the light into the face of Rose, who sprang half up as if from a sound sleep, they laughed at her supposed fright, and walked on through the tunnel of caverns.

A moment after Rose was again by the side of the scout, who drew from his pocket a match, and lighting it read the slip of paper that had descended with the file and revolver.

"There are but two guards, and they will doubtless be relieved at dark; *then I will act.*

"Find your way out, as soon as you have freed yourself of your irons, to the mouth of the chasm, and I will meet you there."

"Brave fellow; now, Miss Clifton, hope brightens for us; but you must return to your cot, and as soon as I have gotten rid of my irons I will come for you.

"In the meantime I will file these irons off my ankles."

The cool, confident manner of Buffalo Bill gave

Rose every hope, and throwing herself upon the cot, she waited in breathless silence and suspense.

A short while and again a light flashed into the cavern, and two men stood there, but not the two who had before passed by.

"Wide awake, my beauty? You'll dim those pretty eyes if you lose your sleep," said one of the bandits; but whether in a kind or unkind tone Rose could not tell.

Another glance into the cave of the scout, a jeering remark from one of them, and they passed on toward the camp.

An hour later, and the scout stood beside Rose, a man no longer in irons.

"Come, Miss Clifton, I am ready now; give me my arms, which the fair spy left here, and we will depart at once."

Rose could hardly refrain from a little cry of joy, and the next moment they had departed from the cave, and started forth upon their desperate chance of escape—one chance in a thousand.

CHAPTER CXV.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

Reckless Rob had kept his word to follow the trail of Buffalo Bill, and alone.

He had reached the hills, had come upon the splendid bay horse of the scout astray, saddled and bridled and readily caught.

By the most clever work he had found at last a safe retreat for his own horse and Redskin, and then gotten to a position overlooking the chasm, in which were the caves where the bandits' captives were confined.

When Reckless Rob lowered the package to Buffalo Bill, by the aid of a string made by cutting his blankets into strips, he drew up the line when he felt

it relieved of its burden, and at once began to descend the other slope of the hill range.

After a walk of a mile he came to a small valley, thickly overgrown with grass, and through which trickled a stream of clear water.

Here, unsaddled and picketed out, were the two steeds.

"Well, old fellows, you have had a rich feast and good rest; now to work!" said Rob, kindly, and he at once set to work to saddle and bridle the steeds.

Giving them a drink from the cool spring, he then mounted his own horse, and, followed by Redskin, rode along round the edge of the valley.

After a short ride he halted at the foot of the hill leading up to the near side of the chasm, and hitching the two animals, ascended cautiously the steep path, until, in the moonlight, he discovered the bold face of the cliff, and the fissure that he knew was the cut-in dividing the mountain in twain.

"Now, I must be cautious, or I'll have to use my rifle, and that might spoil all," he muttered, and throwing himself upon the ground, he wormed along like a snake, slowly and noiselessly drawing nearer to a large boulder, where he knew, from his observation taken in the daytime, the two guards were stationed.

It was fully an hour before he drew near the boulder, against which stood the form of a man, gazing at the moon as it arose above the distant hilltops.

At his feet, close against the rock, lay a muffled form, the other guard, wrapped in sleep, doubtless.

Rob was now within twenty feet of the guards, and the moonlight shining full in his handsome face showed that it was marred by a look of stern determination.

"I don't like it and it's a dirty job, but I must do it.

"If he was an Indian I would not hesitate; still, Buffalo Bill must not die!"

So saying, Reckless Rob arose quickly and silently to his feet; his knife was held in his upraised right hand, and then glittered like a wheel of diamonds in the moonlight as it was hurled with unerring and terrible force at the silent and unsuspecting guard.

Fair and deadly it struck him in the neck, crunching through bone and muscle, and sending the strong man quickly to the ground.

With two mighty bounds, Reckless Rob threw himself upon the half-awake and recumbent guard, and a clutch of iron was upon his throat.

"Struggle one instant and you shall die," he sternly cried in the bandit's ear, while with his other hand he held a pistol to his head.

"You hold the winning hand, pard," gasped the man, as Reckless Rob released his clutch upon his throat.

"Yes, and I intend to win the game. Your comrade lies there dead, as you see, and you shall quickly follow him if you are not willing to do as I ask."

"You want me to betray my comrades——"

"No! I wish you to lead me, singly, into their camp. Are you afraid of a single man?"

"No, and if you are willing to take the chances, come on; but you must be crazy."

"I am not crazy; I only have a duty to perform. Lead me to the spot I desire and back here and I ask no more. Then I will spare your life; attempt to betray me and you shall die."

"When am I to be free?"

"Upon my return to this spot; I will then bind you and leave you here for the morning guard to find you—or——"

"Or what?"

"I will carry you with me a few miles and release you in time to return here by daylight; and then you

can tell what lie you please about being attacked, your comrade being killed, and you beating back the enemy single-handed."

"'A drowning man catches at a straw,' my old Sunday-school teacher used to say, when urging me to catch at religion as a means of salvation, so I will accept your terms," disconsolately replied the bandit, whose whole manner and conversation proved that he had seen better days ere he entered upon a life of crime.

Searching his prisoner to see that he had no arms secreted about his person, and drawing his knife from the stiffened neck of the other guard, Rob securely bound his captive's hands, and holding firmly to his arm, bade him proceed.

The bandit at once led off, and approaching the cut in the cliff, entered it and moved rapidly on in the darkness, for ever and anon they would have to pass through a rocky tunnel.

After a walk of ten minutes they came to where a large mass of rock had fallen, forming a huge cavern beneath.

When about to enter into the darkness of this, from the indistinct light that penetrated down into the canyon a stern voice suddenly cried out:

"Hold! on your lives, halt!"

Both Reckless Rob and his prisoner were momentarily startled by the sudden challenge, but the former cried, quickly:

"Buffalo Bill—hurrah!"

"Rob, old fellow, a moment more and I would have called in your checks; but who have you here?" and, springing forward, out of the darkness of the cavern, the scout confronted his friend.

"This is one of the guards at the mouth of the canyon——"

"And the other is——"

"In the devil's employ; but come, we have no time to tarry—where is your fellow captive?"

"Here! Miss Clifton, this is my friend, Reckless Rob, the best man on the plains," and at the introduction, Rose came forward, and clasping the hand of Rob, said feelingly:

"And to whom we, in a great measure, owe our escape."

"Now, Rob, we'll be off. Come."

Again the bandit led the way, his captor by his side, and in a few moments more they came out at the front of the cliff.

At the sight of the dead guard Rose shuddered, and drew closer to Buffalo Bill, while Rob said, quickly:

"Now, my man, you have done your part of the contract—will you have us bind you and leave you here, or carry you with us a few miles and turn you loose?"

"The latter would look best for me—for if I am suspected by my comrades my life is not worth a *peso*."

"All right; come on."

Again Rob led the way, the Pilot quietly taking Rose up in his strong arms and carrying her down the steep and rocky hillside, for, retarded as she was by her long skirt, and wearing light shoes, she could not have easily walked.

"Miss Clifton can ride your horse, Rob, while we walk," said Buffalo Bill, as they reached the foot of the hill.

"Not so bad as that, comrade, for I have Redskin with me."

The delight of the Pilot was unbounded, and the next moment he stood beside his gallant steed, and warmly patted his neck, while the faithful animal seemed overjoyed and whinnied in a low, happy tone.

"Miss Clifton, I can give you a seat behind me,

for Redskin can easily do double duty," said Buffalo Bill, and lifting Rose to her seat, he the next moment sprang into the saddle, and Rob having mounted, with his prisoner behind him, the party set off at a slow trot through the forest.

A ride of several hours brought them to a valley, and here the prisoner was told to dismount and return to his post, which he gladly did, thanking Rob kindly for his life, and the next moment disappearing in the gloom of the timber.

"Now, Rob, it is a hundred miles to the fort, and we must push on rapidly, for both Redskin and your horse can stand it—if Miss Clifton can," said Buffalo Bill.

"Only try me and see how much I can stand, now that I am free once more," said Rose Clifton.

CHAPTER CXVI.

THE RANGER CHIEF.

The morning after the flight of the prisoners from the bandit stronghold the camp was early astir, and the relief guard sent to the outer end of the chasm, which being a secret entrance was never considered worthy of a large force to watch and protect it.

Upon arriving at the place all was at once excitement, for the dead body of one of the guards was discovered, while his companion, pale and weary-looking, paced nervously to and fro, his rifle in his hand.

"What means this?" asked Captain Rudolph, who was leaving the stronghold by the chasm passage, accompanied by half a hundred of his men, whom he was leading in chase of the train of which Buffalo Bill had been guide.

"It means, captain, that I was attacked last night, and poor Watson slain; but after a sharp skirmish I managed to drive off my foes."

"Who were they—Indians or whites?"

"They were white men. After Watson was killed I retreated into yonder gulch, and they kept me there for fully half an hour, when at last they retreated."

"Why did you not summon aid, sir?"

"How could I, captain? Watson was killed in the first charge, and I was forced back into the gulch besides, I thought you would hear the firing."

"No, the roar of the fall doubtless drowned the sound. What do you say, sir?" he continued, turning to a horseman who dashed up, having just come through the tunnel way.

"Buffalo Bill and the girl have escaped, sir."

"A thousand furies! Is this so?"

"Yes, sir; they are not in their caves, and the rifle and arms of the scout are also gone."

"Then there is a traitor in the camp. Martin, this looks black for you," and the young leader looked suspiciously at the guard, who turned deadly pale.

"Well, we must not linger here, but strike the trail of the scout. Down the hill there, some of you, and see if you can find any traces of their flight."

Half-a-dozen men obeyed the order, and soon returned to report that the fresh tracks of two horses were visible, and that the trail led up the valley.

"It is as I expected. Antonio!"

"Well, senor?" and a dark-faced, black-eyed Mexican rode forward and saluted.

"Take this man, Martin, back to the Ranger Chief, and relate the particulars as you know them."

"Yes, senor."

"Also say that I have gone on the trail of the prisoners, and if I find I cannot overtake them, will then branch off after the train."

"Yes, senor," and again saluting his leader, Antonio disarmed the unfortunate guard and marched him away, while Captain Rudolph and his men started in rapid pursuit of the scout and Rose Clifton.

Through the long chasm the guard was led by

Antonio, the man who had brought the information to Captain Rudolph of the escape of the prisoners, until the plateau was reached, and an excited crowd were there gathered, discussing the flight of the daring scout.

Observing that their comrade, Martin, was a prisoner, for his hands were bound, many questions were asked by the bandits; but in silence Antonio continued on his way across the plain to where in a clump of trees stood a large and comfortable-looking log cabin.

Around the house were growing a number of fragrant flowers, and around the columns that supported the piazza, running the full length of the front, were vines, entwined so as to form a shady arbor.

A wide hallway ran through the house, which had four rooms in it, those on the right side being used for sleeping, and the two on the left of the hallway were a kitchen and dining-room.

For that out-of-the-way place, and the home of a bandit chief, the house was a most comfortable one, and neatly furnished, while its whole aspect proved that a woman's hand governed the outlaw household.

From the piazza in front a view of the plateau could be seen, with the waters rushing over the fall, the cabins of the band, and the valleys below, all together making a pretty scene.

Upon the piazza, seated in a large and easy-chair, was a striking-looking man, engaged in gazing restlessly over the scene laid out before him.

His form was large and commanding, his complexion dark, his eyes black and fiery, and his hair and beard long and as white as snow, though his general appearance scarcely indicated that he was more than sixty years of age.

Though venerable-looking, there was not that halo in his face which frequently comes with old age, and white hair; but, instead, a stern look haunted the

mouth, and a restless, cruel glitter trembled in the eyes.

He was dressed in a blue blouse suit, and hanging upon one arm of the chair was a belt containing two revolvers and a knife.

Upon the other arm of the chair was a broad straw hat encircled by a gold cord.

Upon the little finger of his left hand glittered a single diamond of great value, and around his neck hung a huge chain of massive gold, attached to a large hunting case watch of costly make.

Altogether, he was a remarkable-looking man, and none need look to him for mercy were his inclinations against it.

"Theo!" he suddenly called out, in a stern, ringing voice.

"Yes, father," and the young girl, already known to the reader, came forth upon the piazza from one of the inner rooms.

"I wish you would mount Spectre and make a circuit on the prairie and see if there is any trace of that train to which the scout belonged, for I have more confidence in you than in all my scouts, whites and redskins."

"Shall I go at once, father?"

"Yes—curse that fellow, I would give a good deal to know how he escaped. I wish I had had him shot yesterday."

And thus the old chief went on muttering imprecations against Buffalo Bill for half an hour before the news had been brought him of the escape of the scout and Rose.

A few moments more and Theo dashed by on her white steed, and once more clad in her ghostly costume, which looked weird even in the bright light of the sun.

"Yes, she is true to me, and so is Rudolph; but who else can I trust?"

"I am getting along in years now, and soon must give up this outlaw life, and then in some foreign capitol I will luxuriate on the gold I have won.

"Gold I have in vast quantities, but not yet enough—no, not enough! I must have more, and then I can live like a prince. Like a prince, did I say? Like a king, I mean, for am I not king here?"

"And that girl—who can she be?"

"I certainly have seen her face before, and last night I saw it in my dreams, over and over again.

"She is a proud and fearless creature, too, for I could not intimidate her.

"And she must be the daughter of some one high in authority, or else she would have given her name; but curse that scout! I would give a score of lives for his single one," and thus the old chief muttered on, running from one subject to another, until suddenly he descried Antonio and the bound guard approaching.

"Well, whom have we here? Ah, Antonio, the man I sent after Rudolph with the news of the escape. Well, Antonio, what has Martin been doing that you have him bound?"

"Senor chief, the senor captain bade me bring the guard back and tell you that his companion on duty last night was killed, and——"

"Speak, scoundrel, and answer for yourself!" yelled the infuriated old chief.

In trembling tones, the frightened bandit told the same story which he had related to Captain Rudolph, and when he had finished, he saw that there was no hope for him in this life.

"Antonio, bind that traitor to yonder post—there! Now, summon the people in front of my cabin and we will get rid of one man who would betray us."

Antonio, the Mexican, was a sub-officer under the chief, and commanded the stronghold defenses,

hence he was willing that Martin should be executed, so as to turn the tide of wrath from himself.

He therefore at once departed to obey the orders of his chief, and, left alone with the old man, the doomed bandit implored for mercy, and made a full confession of the facts of the case.

But the old chief cruelly laughed in his face and sneered forth:

"How did he get his arms from this cabin? Tell me that, sir traitor?"

"I know not, chief; I have told you the whole truth."

But in vain the man pleaded, for the chief knew no such word as mercy, and the people of the stronghold beginning to assemble, poor Martin ceased his entreaties and tried to become calm and indifferent to his fate.

Soon all were assembled, a motley group of men, women and children, among whom were Americans, Irish, Mexicans, Germans, negroes and Indians.

With the women were a few miserable-looking whites, some of them captives, perhaps, dragged down to a life of crime, and a few who had followed their evil husbands into outlawry; but the most of the females were Indian squaws.

In high glee, for they reveled in bloodshed, the wild crowd came together, and with eager looks feasted their appetites for the horrible upon the pale but now calm face of the doomed guard.

"Antonio, pick out your men, and when I give the signal let that traitor meet his just fate."

"Yes, senor."

The condemned man was then led to one side and placed with his back toward the cliff, the crowd forming three sides of a hollow square with that promptness and discipline, which frequent experience in a like deadly drill had taught them.

"Now, traitor, beg for your life," called out the old chief, still comfortably seated in his easy-chair.

"I will not give you the pleasure of hearing me beg for the life which I have made a curse to myself," firmly responded the outlaw.

"Ha! he has pluck, then. Antonio, watch my signal."

"Yes, senor."

Erect and defiant stood the condemned man, his eyes gazing as it were far into the past, and his face brave and stern.

Raising his hands, the old chief glanced first at the half-dozen riflemen, selected as the executioners, and then upon the victim.

Then with a loud clap, his hands came together, and a volley of firearms followed.

Without a moan or a word, Martin, the outlaw guard, fell dead, just as Theo dashed rapidly up, her horse covered with sweat and foam.

"What means this execution, father?" she asked, hastily.

"Why have you returned so soon?" evasively answered the chief.

"I was chased back by a band of mounted Sioux——"

"Ha! How many, girl?"

"About half a hundred."

"No need for us to fear them, but——"

"Father, why has Martin been executed? He was one of the best men in the band."

"So I believed him; but he proved a traitor and aided the prisoners to escape," and the chief told Theo of the occurrence on the outpost, and the death of the other guard.

"Still, he might have been innocent," urged the maiden.

"No, he stole the scout's arms from my room——"

"What! Have you forgotten you made me a present of those weapons?" and Theo's face turned pale.

"By Heaven, you are right, girl! Still, I am confident that the guard was a traitor."

"I do not believe it; the escape was certainly most mysterious; but I do not believe one person in this camp aided him," and Theo entered the cabin, feeling sad at the thought that she having taken the scout's arms to him had caused the execution of a man who was doubtless guiltless of the crime of which he was charged.

CHAPTER CXVII.

TO A PARD'S RESCUE.

When Buffalo Bill, Reckless Rob and Rose Clifton left the retreat of the Ranger Chief they sped rapidly on until dawn, when they camped for rest and breakfast, for Rob had his provisions along.

When this was over, Reckless Rob said:

"When I went out on the prairie just now, Pard Bill, to bring in our horses, I saw several Indians in the distance, so my advice is for you to mount and go on with Miss Clifton, while I scout about to see what force they are in and what their game is, and bring word on to the fort."

"It would not be a bad idea, Rob, but come to the fort by the ranger trail, and as soon as I get there I shall start back to meet you, for I fear the Indians are scouting in force and mean mischief.

"I will push on rapidly, for Redskin can stand it."

Soon after Buffalo Bill, with Rose Clifton mounted behind him, parted with Reckless Rob and kept on the trail to the fort.

They had gone but a few miles when out of a clump of timber dashed a party of mounted redskins.

Buffalo Bill halted and leaping from his saddle, opened slowly and surely with his rifle, dropping a

warrior here, a pony there, and emptying the weapon of shots.

Then he mounted and had just started on when a shot came from a chief, who had a rifle and was splendidly mounted.

Then followed a cry from Rose, for the bullet had pierced her arm, it dropping to her side.

Instantly the scout again halted, and turning in his saddle, took the girl from her seat behind him and placing her in front, thus held her, while he said:

"Redskin will soon outfoot those fellows, if he does carry two, and we will then look at that wound, which I trust is slight."

"It is nothing, though it temporarily numbed my arm.

"They are coming very close."

"Yes," and Buffalo Bill urged Redskin on once more.

But the Indians had drawn very near, the chief with a long lance in use, coming rapidly on, as the scout saw by a glance over his shoulder.

Rose also saw that the Indians felt that they had things as they wanted them, and her face was very pale.

"Have no fear, Miss Clifton, for this red whirling of horseflesh will readily drop them behind and not feel his double load," said Buffalo Bill, with confidence.

At the same time he managed to draw a revolver, and with a quick movement half turned and fired.

The chief, so dangerously near, and whose horse was so well ahead of all others in pursuit, fell headlong from his saddle.

The fine horse he rode, apparently fresh and relieved of his load, dashed up alongside of Redskin, and the scout caught the bridle rein.

"Now, Miss Clifton, there is nothing to fear, if you think you can ride in that Indian saddle."

"Gladly, for I can ride any way or anything," was the confident response, and in an instant the transfer was made.

Away went the two horses, then at a speed that quickly distanced the ponies of the Indians, who yelled with frenzy at the death of their chief, and the loss of their captives.

A rapid pace was kept up until a stream was reached, when, dismounting to rest the horses, Buffalo Bill bound up the wound in the arm of Rose Clifton with the skill of a surgeon.

Again the pace was kept up until the afternoon, when in the distance the flag was visible rising over the fort, some dozen miles away.

"Miss Clifton, as this is a fine grazing ground for Redskin, I shall leave him here, for before I get back he will have some four or five hours' rest, and I will leave the chief's horse at the fort and get a fresh animal, for I am going to find my pard, Reckless Rob."

"You lead a very remarkable life, Mr. Cody, and one full of danger; but I trust that you will find your friend has met with no harm."

"Rob knows how to take care of himself, Miss Clifton; but we will scout around to get all the information we can about the outlaws and their retreat, so that your father can send a force to wipe them out."

"And what will be the fate of that beautiful girl, the Ranger Chief's daughter?" asked Rose.

"Caught in bad company, she will have to suffer to a certain extent, I fear, but it is the old chief and his son that we must down," said the scout, who, having staked Redskin, free from saddle and bridle, out to feed, now put his saddle on the captured horse and with Rose again mounted behind him rode on.

It was just sunset when they thus rode into the

fort, and the cheers of the soldiers made the hills ring with echoes.

Colonel Clifton welcomed his daughter back with joy he could not hide, and tears were in his eyes as he wrung Buffalo Bill's hand, the scout modestly remarking:

"I am not the one to thank, colonel, but my pard, Reckless Rob, whom I am at once going to join."

"If you will have a force of three troops of cavalry ready for an instant call, one of us will come to you with news soon, sir, that I believe will end in the capture of the outlaw retreat."

"I will have them ready, Cody—in fact, will send them to camp on the trail some thirty miles nearer to you than is the fort."

"I thank you, sir, and now I will get a fresh horse and some provisions to take back with me."

An hour after, mounted upon a horse presented to him by the colonel, and leading another fine animal carrying a well-filled pack saddle, Buffalo Bill left the fort in the light of the rising moon, followed by the cheers of the soldiers.

It was midnight when he reached the hiding-place where he had left Redskin, and found him well rested and quietly feeding.

An hour's halt there, and with Redskin following, Buffalo Bill pushed on until dawn, when he halted for rest and breakfast in a timber island.

Hardly had he done so when he saw a horseman coming toward him at full speed.

"Reckless Rob, as I live, and with a couple of dozen Indians in chase and rapidly gaining, for his horse is tired and theirs are fresh. He is hoping to reach this timber and stand them off!"

CHAPTER CXVIII.

THE SURPRISE.

Into the timber dashed Reckless Rob, prepared to stand at bay against big odds, and ignorant of the fact that help was at hand.

"Hello, Rob, glad to see you!" cried Buffalo Bill.

"Pard Bill! Always on hand when needed," shouted Reckless Rob, and he bounded to the place where Buffalo Bill had taken shelter, rifle in hand.

A minute more and the redskins dashed up into revolver range, and all grouped together.

Four revolvers rattled out lively music, spitting forth fire and lead, and the surprised Indians were only too glad to escape as they could.

The rifles of the two palefaces were then brought into use, and several flying warriors, believing themselves safe, were picked off their ponies.

Then the two pards had a long talk, the result of which was that Buffalo Bill sent Reckless Rob to the fort, or to meet the troopers if on their way, to bring them on rapidly, while the commandant was asked to send a courier to the traders' train to tell Little Yankee to go into camp upon the Blue Water Creek until he, Cody, and Reckless Rob joined them.

After supper Reckless Rob departed, while Buffalo Bill went on a scout toward the outlaw stronghold, telling his pard where to meet him with the soldiers.

It was the next evening when Reckless Rob arrived at the appointed place, accompanied by Major Alburton and a hundred cavalry, and after a rest of couple of hours the march was begun.

Buffalo Bill and his good pard led the way, and the troopers were taken to the tunnel entrance to the outlaws' retreat.

Going on ahead with Reckless Rob, and on foot, Buffalo Bill said:

"There is the outlaw sentinel, Rob, and he may

be well supported since my escape," and he pointed to the guard pacing to and fro in the moonlight, while he took a long bow and fitted an arrow to it.

"Now!" and with the word Buffalo Bill sent the arrow on its flight.

The guard sank in his tracks, and, going forward cautiously the two scouts beheld a number of blanketed forms.

"All asleep, Rob, so go back and bring up the major and his men."

Reckless Rob obeyed, while Buffalo Bill walked up near the sleeping men, and concealing himself behind a rock, called out:

"You are my prisoner!"

"Resistance means instant death!"

The strange, stern voice awoke the sleepers, and they started up, to be again warned, and then the troopers came up, to find Buffalo Bill holding six men prisoners.

"I know the way, major, and we can ride through the tunnel," said Cody, as he mounted his horse.

Then the prisoners were secured, and the ride was made without an alarm, to dash with shouts and shots upon the surprised outlaws in their cabins.

It was a complete surprise, a desperate fight at close quarters, a complete victory for the soldiers.

The old Ranger Chief was mortally wounded, while Rudolph, his son, was killed with half of his fighting force.

Feeling that he had received his death wound, the Ranger Chief said that he wished to see Buffalo Bill, and alone.

The scout went to him and knelt by his side, saying in a kindly way:

"How can I serve you, chief?"

"I am chief no longer, and you have killed me and ruined me. But can I trust you to serve me?"

"Yes, faithfully will I do all that I can for you."

"Then hear what I have to say and do not betray me.

"My son is dead, and it is better so, for the gallows would have been his fate in the end.

"My daughter Theo must be cared for, and so I tell you my secret, for you must take her to Colonel Clifton and ask him to care for her, for she has gold and jewels that are not blood-stained, for they belonged to her mother.

"Tell Colonel Clifton that his elder brother, Ralph, whom he has long believed dead, sends Theo, his daughter, to him.

"She is guilty of no wrong, more than playing the Ghost Spy, and in which she obeyed my orders.

"Keep the secret from all save my brother—Theo knows it.

"On your honor you will do this for one who was robbed by his best friends, and so driven to a life of evil?"

"I will!"

"I believe you, Buffalo Bill."

Soon after the old Ranger Chief passed away. Theo, his beautiful daughter by his side, and for her sake Major Ashburton had the outlaw leader and his son decently buried.

When the dead outlaws had been buried, and the wounded placed under a guard until they recovered, the prisoners were started for the fort, along with the booty and stock captured, and Major Ashburton treated Theo with marked respect, sending her ahead with an escort with Buffalo Bill as guide, to the fort.

It was a severe shock to the gallant colonel to learn from the scout that the Ranger Chief was his elder brother, to whom he had been greatly attached in boyhood, but it was a relief to know from Buffalo Bill that no one knew the secret, or need do so.

But Colonel Clifton gave Theo a warm welcome and told her that his home should be hers, while Rose greeted the lovely girl with affection, and said, earnestly:

"You are my cousin, but shall be my sister, for do I not owe much to you, Theo?"

"And the change from a Ghost Spy of an outlaw band to the adopted daughter and sister of a noble man and beautiful girl, I owe to you, Buffalo Bill, and never will I forget you," said the girl, as she bade the scout good-by, when he started with Reckless Rob to guide across the prairie another wagon train, and to guard them against attack by the relentless redskins.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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We will have to reserve to ourselves the right of judging which anecdote has the most merit, but our readers know that they may depend upon Street & Smith and on their absolute fairness and justice in conducting contests. This one will be no exception to the rule.

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PRIZE ANECDOTE DEPARTMENT.

During the progress of the Anecdote Prize Contest this space is being devoted to the publication of the best anecdotes sent in by the contestants.

Here are some of those received this week. Read them, boys, and then send in your own. There are still plenty of chances for everybody to win the prizes offered.

A Race on the Ice.

(By Charles Baildon, Pawtucket, R. I.)

This adventure of mine occurred on the ice at Coes' pond in Worcester, and is true.

I and a young man called Hugh McGurl went fishing with a drop net such as you let down through the ice. We met some more men on the pond. One of these my companion was well acquainted with. They were fishing, too, so to pass the time away I started to skate around. This friend of my companion was easily provoked.

I got too near one of the holes, and he told me to keep away as I suppose I was scaring the fish. I said something he didn't like and he made a dash for me, but I was too quick for him. We then raced across the pond from one end to the other, he on foot, I on skates. The pond was all of a mile long. It is needless to say who won. I don't think I ever skated so fast before in my life. I was skating for dear life. I would not have let that fellow catch me for worlds. When I got to the other end I put around a bend of the pond and into the woods, took my skates off and made for home. I heard he looked all around for me. Not finding me, I guess he gave it up. I don't know what he would have done to me. I did not stop to find out, but it was a close one for me.

A Narrow Escape.

(By Joseph Quinn, Putnam, Conn.)

"Dick," said I, "I have an idea."

"Well, what is it?" said Dick.

"A tiger hunt," I replied.

"It's a go!" said Dick. So we two boys put on our hunting clothes and took guns and started out.

We had not gone long before we heard a rustling in the bushes.

"Hark!" said I, "did you hear that?"

I had hardly spoken the words when out from the bushes came a tiger.

We were frightened, and dropped our guns and took to our heels. On came the tiger and on we ran. The tiger was now only a few feet away. Something had to be done. It would do no good to call for help, for the nearest house was nearly three miles. We could not keep it up much longer, for the beast was gaining on us. "What shall we do?" asked Dick.

"Don't ask me," I replied.

Once Dick thought he heard a shout from some of his chums. If help were coming, they would have to be quick about it.

We were now passing a bush where a bear trap had been set. Dick, who was in the lead, shouted to me to look out, and nearly stumbled into it himself.

I, who happened to be looking around, did not see it, and was not quick enough to heed Dick's advice, when click went the spring of the trap and I was a prisoner.

Dick, who thought I was still behind him, kept on.

Meantime, I, caught by the leg in the trap, pull as I might, could not free myself.

The tiger was only a few feet away, and when he saw me he gave a howl of delight and started for me. There I was at the mercy of the beast, but what could I do? Of all the tricks that I had thought of and played on my chums, I could not think of any to get out of this trap.

Oh! if some one would only come. The tiger, with gleaming eyes, stooped on his haunches and was just about to make a spring for my throat, when "Click!" went the trigger of a gun, and the tiger leaped into the air with a howl of pain and dropped dead on the ground.

I had fainted. When I came to there was my chum, Dick, and an old trapper leaning over me. When I had left Dick Dick came across this old trapper and walked back with him to find me, for it was the bullet of the old hunter's gun that had saved my life.

I was taken home, and the next morning met Dick going to school.

"Wasn't that a close call?" I said.

"You bet it was, and no more tiger hunts for me," replied Dick.

"Nor me, either," replied I, laughingly.

An Adventure with a Bull.

(By Raymond Trefry, Marblehead, Mass.)

I write to you of my adventure with a bull. I and a boy named James set out to take a walk in a woods not far away. While we were enjoying the beautiful scenery we were startled by a crashing near at hand, and what was our surprise when we saw a bull. Instantly we climbed a large nut tree. The bull, who saw us, waited impatiently for us to come down. At last he got tired and went away. We got down from the tree and laughed heartily over our escape.

A Great Success.

(By W. S. Grumman, Malvern, Ohio.)

It was one night last September, one year ago, that I and two companions were gathered around the fire in our club-room discussing what we should do.

At last I was elected to go up-town and bring in something to eat. After which I went, and on returning I was stopped by an acquaintance who had just returned from a fair near by.

A conversation ensued between us two very quietly which ended in my going off, saying, "Well, you had better not," which was answered by, "All right, we'll see."

As I entered the clubroom I deposited my purchases on the table; at the same time saying to Perry Crawford, "Comp you are president, and Knepper is up-town drunk as a lord wanting to fight everybody."

"He says he is coming down here, and I told him he had better not, for I would put him out. Now, pres., must I?"

He responded by turning to Charley Wilson and asking opinion.

Charlie replied that he was against Knepper entering that settled it, and I must put him out.

Immediately there was an unsteady tramp on the stair the door flew open and in stepped Knepper, staggering over the room.

My companions looked at me as much as to say, "We do it."

So I turned to Knepper and said, "Harry, you will have go out."

"I will (hic), will I?"

"Yes, you will."

"Well, let's see me (hic). I am running things to-night."

"I'll show you," said I, going to the door, and added: "Knepper, you make a blamed fool of yourself," at which a pistol flashed in the hands of the drunken man, and instantly there came a "crack" and an oath. I fell heavily to the floor. Perry rushed on Knepper, seized the still smoking revolver, wrenched it from his hand and rushed out yelling, "Murder!" while Charley fell in a swoon upon the floor. A crowd began to gather at the foot of the stairs as Knepper pulled Perry inside, locking the door and bursting into a loud, long laugh. "Get up, Baldy, or you will scare them to death."

At which I made an effort to rise, but couldn't, for laughing and rolling over and over. I landed in the corner, rubbing my eyes as the tears rolled down my cheeks from laughter. Perry stood gazing upon us speechless. At last we gathered ourselves together enough to explain to him that Knepper and I had planned it out up-town, and the revolver contained nothing but a blank cartridge. A little cold water soon brought Charley to himself. After which we explained to him. Both fellows wished it to be kept as secret, we complied with the wish for some months, but finally it got out, which angered the two boys somewhat, but ended in a lasting friendship.

A Night with a Crazy Woman.

(By Emanuel Shumaster, Berkley, Cal.)

This happened to me about six years ago. I am an orphan and had a home with a man named J. A. Jackson.

One night I had an adventure with his wife, who proved to be crazy and was afterward sent to the asylum, and was there three years when she died. That night I was awakened about nine o'clock by some one touching my arm. I was frightened and jumped up without saying a word. The lady caught hold of me, and as I was frightened I grabbed for the bed, but I just caught a blanket. I was so frightened that I did not let go of it.

Mrs. Jackson led me away for about a mile to an old river bed and there she walked all night long, leading me after her. After I got over my fright I tried to get away, but it was impossible. Every now and then she would stop and listen, and if I did not stand still she would give me a box over the ear. About five o'clock she started for the hills. For some reason, she did not leave the road, and I was glad of it, too. On the way she passed a man's house. The man knew her well, and when he saw her pass at such an hour and so far from home, he stopped her and at the sight of him she shrieked and fainted, and she was carried inside. When I told what I knew the man sent for her husband, and he came. By this time she had come to and felt better. When he asked her what was the matter she said, "Oh, you dirty wretch, you would shoot me, would you?"

She had thought that he had got up and was after her with a pistol. As soon as I got home I went and reported to the marshal, and he had the case investigated. They found her crazy and sent her to the asylum. I would not like to pass such a night again, and I don't think any of your readers would, either.

My First Panther Hunt.

(By Walter R. Branham, Peru, Ind.)

It was reported that a panther was seen in a large woods south of the town. As my pards, Howard and Harry Spohn by name, wished to go on the hunt of him we started out one bright moonlight night armed with good rifles and hunting knives. As we reached the outskirts of the wood a wood cutter that lived there showed us claw marks on a tree. We did not then believe there was a panther near, but supposed it was all gossip. We started into the woods, and commenced the hunt. There was thick underbrush on all sides, so we deployed out about ten yards apart, so as to cover a greater width. Then we kept a sharp lookout.

We passed through one part of the woods and started back through the thickest part. We were half-way through when all at once we heard a piercing scream a little ways ahead. It startled us, but we regained our nerve and crept cautiously ahead.

We kept scanning the trees and underbrush when all at once I saw two glaring eyes like coals of fire, and the yellowish hair shining in the rays of the moon.

The beast was crouched in a tree top close to me. I threw my rifle to my shoulder and took aim as well as I could, in the semi-light, just behind the shoulder and fired.

There followed a screech and a body lit on me and bore me to the ground. I had previously drawn my hunting knife, and as he sprang on me my knife pierced his heart and at the same moment two sharp reports rang out on the night air and two bullets pierced his body. The shots were fired by my pards.

The panther gave a convulsive struggle and lay a heavy weight on me, for he was dead.

I received five long scratches from each hind paw in my sides, but not very deep, owing to my thick clothing. He was a fine, large American panther.

We still have his hide, which we had stuffed, and hold it as a trophy.

An Adventure with Horse Thieves.

(By Owen Burner, Robinson, Illinois.)

About eleven o'clock Tuesday night I came downstairs to get me a drink. When I got to the well I happened to look toward the barn and saw a light. I looked at it for a while, then went and woke my father. We went to the barn and found two men. They had our black horses harnessed and hitched up. We were right on them before they knew it. My father shouted to them. Then he grabbed the largest fellow. The other started to run and fell over a block of wood. I was on his back before he could get up. What followed for a while was not slow. I got hold of a brick and knocked him silly. Then I hit him another lick. My father had his man bound hand and foot. Then we tied my man and put them both in the corn crib. We unhitched the horses and put them in their stalls, and then my father took a saddle horse and went after the sheriff. I went to the house. When my father came back with the sheriff, the thieves were gone. The next night we kept watch and caught the thieves. They were sent to prison or five years.

In the Quicksands.

(By Thomas Durman, Pierson, Iowa.)

I am thirteen years old and have had an experience with a rattlesnake and quicksand that I will not forget for a while. It was on the 29th of June, 1899. I and my two cousins, Eugene and Chub Bovee, of Blair, Neb., where I was visiting, went fishing down to McKeney's Lake, near the Missouri River.

When we got to the lake we found an old boat. We jumped in and pushed off. We soon became so busy fishing that we did not notice that the wind had driven us down to Quicksand Point. We went ashore and my oldest cousin, Eugene, jumped out and immediately sank up to his knees in the quicksand. He tried to wiggle out, but he only went in deeper, and at last got in up to his waist.

I got the seat loose from the boat and threw it to him. He took hold of it for support. I jumped out on the seat and took hold of his arms and pulled him out so that he could get his legs over the seat. Then he got hold of a branch and got out. I had left my younger cousin in the boat and as I started to go back I went in the sand to my knees and kept sinking deeper. I got hold of the seat and pulled myself out a ways. Then, I too, caught hold of the limb and saved myself.

By that time the seat had sunk and I could not find it.

At last we started back home. On the way we got into a place where there were lots of brush, and we got into a nest of rattlesnakes. I got bitten two times, and my younger cousin once. I had some whiskey which I carried on purpose for snake bites, but my younger cousin would not drink any of it, so I forced it down his throat. He drank half of it and I drank the rest. Then we felt kind of weak, and wanted to go to sleep, but I told my other cousin not to let us go to sleep, and he pricked us with pins and rolled us about. At last the sleepiness wore off. Then we went home never to return. We got high praise, for lots of people have been lost at Quicksand Point and we were the first to escape from its clutches.

A Horse Race.

(By Lewis A. Heckaman, Bremen, Ind.)

A short time ago I bridled and saddled my horse to ride to camp-meeting. On the way I saw my chum, Oliver, and told him to get out his horse and come along. After we were mounted and rode a little ways I told him my horse could run faster than his, but he did not believe it.

So we started out, and was to run two miles and then stop.

My horse was ahead all the time till we were nearly there. Then, all of a sudden, he stumbled and fell, and threw me headlong. I turned about a dozen somersaults, and then bumped my head against a stone. How long I lay there I know not, but when I came to my partner was standing beside me and was holding my horse.

"Hello!" said he, "I thought you had cashed in your checks this time."

He helped me on my horse and we started home. When we got there he put my horse in the stable and I went to bed.

The next morning the folks sent for a doctor. In about two hours the doctor came and examined my head. He said the cut was not dangerous, but I would have to stay in bed a few days. I lay in bed for three days, then I felt all right and got up, but I haven't ridden a horse since.

Entombed in a Coal Mine.

(By Howard Pilchard, Pomeroy, Ohio.)

Being a very constant reader of your Buffalo Bill Weeklies I noticed your offer in that Anecdote Prize Contest, and I thought I would tell of my experience in a coal mine. About two months ago a friend of mine named Frank, and myself, planned a trip in the coal mine. Well, we started to go in, but were told it was not safe. But we did not listen, so we went anyhow. We had only got out of sight of daylight when we heard an awful rumbling which we supposed came from the outside, but which we found to be a "cave-in"—that is, a large fall of slate, which barred our way from going back. Of course we were frightened, but we went on, hoping to get out at the other end. We went about two hundred and fifty yards when we ran upon another fall of slate which looked to be very solid. We both felt very much alarmed, but no wonder, we were caged up under millions of pounds of earth. I started to look with my lamp for some way of escape, and started down to an old switch, and not being familiar with it ran into a "sink"—that is, a sink for water. Of course, I yelled, which brought Frank to me, just as I was crawling out of the water. Frank suggested that we build a fire, but I said no, for if we had we would have suffocated with smoke. We went back to the opening which we had entered and began to make a noise, which the workmen heard, but we did not know it. Well, we lay down in the car which we came in, utterly helpless. I was very cold, being all wet. We lay there I know not how long, but finally went to sleep, and when we awoke daylight was streaming in on us. The men had just broken through and were coming after us. They took us out to where a great crowd was standing that began to cheer. I was taken home where I became ill for a short time, and when I improved they told me I was in the mine for a night and day, but we have never been back since.

An Explosion on a Locomotive.

(By Thomas Crago, Opechee, Mich.)

We were working on engine 27, on the H. and C. R. R., when the incident which I am about to relate happened. I was working with an engineer who worked an engine harder than any one else, but did not do as much work as other engineers.

Everything seemed to go wrong with us on this day. In the first place, we were late leaving the roundhouse. Then we got poor coal, and the sand was all gone, so we went without any. When we were a few miles out on the road, late, tired and down-hearted, I noticed a stud in the expansion plate at the bottom of the boiler head leaking, but not badly, and for the time being forgot it. After we had gone a few miles farther I got down from the seat to give "her" some coal when the

plug or stud blew out, throwing boiling water forth in torrents.

The engineer immediately shut off steam and stopped; then he got out the window and ran around to my side of the cab to see if I was hurt, but he could not see me or hear me, so he went back to his side and called to me, but I did not hear him. Then he got on the engine and kicked in front of the volume of water to see if I was there, but I was not. In the same second the plug blew out I felt my hat taken from my head and I jumped off the engine and ran about one hundred yards at a racing gait. I went back to the engine, but not until the engineer, John Schenck, was scalded in his efforts to save me.

John was laid up for four months, and I went to work the next night as usual, but not on the same engine, for she was laid up for some time after our eventful night of hard luck.

John worked only a few months, and then retired to go into business for himself, while I am now firing the engine which nearly took my life.

A Narrow Escape.

(By Arthur Grosvenor, Pomfret Center, Conn.)

While living in Boulder, Colorado, a short time ago, some of my boy friends invited me to go for an all-day drive on the mountains.

There were three of us besides the driver when we started, but only two of us ever returned. After having ridden all the forenoon we had a lunch and then started on again. At about 2:30 p. m., we came to a place where the road was cut into the side of the mountain. Here the road was not more than six inches wider than the carriage, and then you could look down hundreds of feet into the gulch below.

At this point there was a ledge about four feet wide, seven feet long, and about forty feet below the road. Just as we got to this place a "turkey buzzard" (a bird of prey common in Colorado) flew across the road over our heads. The whirr of its wings and the shadow it cast on the road startled the horses and they reared and plunged. One of my friends and myself sat on the side of the carriage nearest the mountain wall, while the driver and my other friend sat on the side next to the precipice. As my friend who (for convenience sake we will call Jack) and myself were on the side next to the mountain wall we tried to get out. But just as we were stepping out the front wheel on the right-hand side of the carriage went over the brink.

The rest of the carriage and horses followed.

As the carriage went over Jack and I fell out and rolled down the side of the precipice toward the ledge. Fortune seemed to favor us, for our clothing caught on the rocks about three feet above the ledge, but as the cloth was not very strong (it being summer), it gave way, but when we struck the ledge we stopped; but my legs were both hanging over the edge and "Jack's" body was partly over. I drew myself away from the edge and looked over and saw far below us the dead bodies of my other friend and the driver. True to their nature the turkey buzzards soon found the dead bodies and as if by magic hundreds of the filthy birds came on the spot. It was a sickening sight and we turned away and commenced to climb up to the road by the help of the ragged rocks. We, at once started back on foot for Boulder, but soon met a team which took us to our homes which we reached late that night.

A Disastrous Race.

(By W. A. Reed, Chelsea, Mass.)

I would like to enter this contest by telling of an adventure I had not long ago. As I was in a race one day with many other boys who race around the block, I was turning a corner quite a ways ahead of the rest of the fellows when a lad came past with a dog. I was going at a great rate and just turned the corner when I went over the dog. He had tripped me. I dived along the sidewalk and my right shoulder hit hydrant with such force as to put my collarbone out of place. I sat down on an old tree which had been cut down not long before. I didn't know whether I was on my head or on my heels. I didn't win the race, I know that much. Everybody thought it a curious accident. I told my mother and she sent me to a doctor, who put my arm in a sling and placed the bone back. I shall never forget this accident.

My Adventure with a Bear.

(By Sidney Freeman, Portland, Ore.)

While I was on a visit to a cousin of mine, Frank, who lived about six miles from the Dallis, Ore., in 1899, I had this adventure with a bear which I wouldn't like to have again.

We had worked hard for about a week to get the hay in and having got it all in, we started one morning about five o'clock for the mountains, which we reached in about four days, if I remember correctly.

We picked our camp in a canyon on the bank of an ice cold mountain creek which was called "The Little Clickitat."

After we had been in camp for about a week Frank set out after a bear, whose tracks he had seen, with the dog, while I remained in camp intending to go fishing.

I went up the creek about 100 yards, and commenced fishing. There were some big trout in that creek, and I had just got a pretty big one on my line and was trying to land him when I heard the brush crackling and supposed it was a bear or some wild animal, so I dropped my pole and fish and made a dash for my gun, which I had left standing against an oak tree about six yards away.

I got my gun, and looking around I saw a large she bear and her cubs eating my fish. I had always boasted how I would like to get a shot at a bear, but when I saw her I commenced to shake and couldn't get a good aim. I shot and broke her forepaw. She was about to run away and I took another hasty aim and fired. I didn't hit the bear, but I killed one of her cubs. This made her crazy and she came at me, intending to chew me up. I got the buck fever, as they call it, and couldn't shoot. She was nearly upon me when I realized my danger and instead of shooting her I dropped my gun and commenced climbing a tree. She made a swipe at my leg, but I had just got a hold on the first branches of the tree, and I jerked myself. Just then there came the bark of a dog and "Shep" came up and commenced worrying the bear. The bear made a run at "Shep" and tore the skin off one side of his body with her paw. The bear's attention being occupied with the dog, I plucked up courage and dropped to the ground. I got my rifle and throwing in another shell I got up near the bear and shot her behind the ear. In about a minute I heard the crack of a rifle and in a little while Frank came in view, having killed the other cub.

A Narrow Escape.

(By Joseph P. Greenan, Buffalo, N. Y.)

"It is just the kind of a day for fishing," remarked Ralph Stark, as we sat fishing from our boat that was tied to the breakwater, the water having been too rough to venture out in the boat.

"Yes," I answered, "but they don't bite very good."

Ralph got out of the boat and went up on the breakwater. There his luck seemed to change, for I soon saw him catch a big perch. I had made up my mind to follow his example when a big wave lifted the boat and tossed it around.

Looking up, I found to my dismay that the wave had lifted the rope from the rock and I was out in the lake. I looked for the oars, but remembered that we had left them on the stones so the waves would not carry them out of the boat. I was alone in the boat, and there was not another craft in sight.

I could see Ralph waving his hands. I watched him till he seemed but a mere speck.

I now saw that the boat was leaking and that it was fast filling up. Grabbing a can that was in the boat, I began to bail the water out, but made little progress.

Looking around, I could see a steamer not more than a mile away. I knew if I could keep up a few minutes longer I would be saved. I was just throwing out a can of water when my hand hit the side of the boat and the can went overboard. My boat was now filling up quickly and I looked around to see that the steamer was lowering a boat; but at that moment my boat went under and I was left struggling in the water.

Not being able to swim, I knew I could not keep up long. I could see the boat that the steamer lowered only a few yards away. At that minute I went under. I could feel an arm under my waist, and then I lost my senses.

When I came to I was home in bed, with Ralph and my

mother standing beside me. I soon learned that I had been picked up by one of the steamers that run between Buffalo and Crystal Beach.

On a Bear Hunt.

(By Louis Brevelieri, Springfield, Mass.)

It was in July and the weather was very hot. We were out camping in a wood that was very thick. We were ready to make a hunt through the woods for a big, dangerous bear. There were four of us, I, Jerry, Harold and Ralph. Jerry and I are brothers. We had just started and were about 100 yards from our camp when a hare went by us at full speed; we were all armed with rifles and revolvers, but before we were able to shoot the hare, the very bear we were looking for was between us and the hare. We all emptied our guns at the bear, but it turned to pursue us. All our guns were loaded again, but not fired till I gave the word. The bear had now got up on her hind legs to spring on me, I being the nearest. Unfortunately my gun was unloaded. Just as the bear made a grab for me I smote him on the head with the handle of the gun, and made him fall. The rest of the boys all began shooting and before we could realize it the bear was dead. The victory was ours, and then we brought the bear home.

In the Nick of Time.

(By Matthew Schiermmer, Chicago, Ill.)

One afternoon in spring, when I was selling some papers, an accident happened which almost cost me my life.

As I said, I was selling some papers and I thought that if I caught a car and went down a few blocks I could sell more papers.

I jumped upon a car and by the time the car reached the place where I wanted to go I sold two papers.

When I arrived at the corner I jumped off the car, and there I began to cry out my papers.

The first man that came along bought a paper, tossing me a dime and hurried on without waiting for the change.

At the end of fifteen minutes I had sold nearly all of my papers, which was pretty good, for I had begun with about thirty papers.

As I kept on crying my papers I heard a man across the street calling for a paper.

"All right," I said, and I started to run across the street.

A car was passing and, waiting until the car had passed, I started to run again.

I did not notice a car coming from the other direction, and before I knew what had happened the car was almost on top of me.

I tried to get out of the way, but I slipped and fell right under the wheels of the car.

Ladies screamed and men shouted while the motorman tried to stop the car.

For a second I was horror-stricken. Then I jerked away my legs and body in the nick of time, for just then the car went by. It was a narrow escape.

A Close Call.

(By Andrew Aaron, Wilmington, Del.)

I read the Buffalo Bill stories, and I saw in your book of the Anecdote Contest, and I thought I would write an anecdote.

One day last week I was out in the country near the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. I was walking along the track near a village when a little girl started to cross the track, and just as she got in the middle of the south-bound track she stumbled and fell. The limited mail was coming down and was a hundred yards away. There was no other person as near as I was. I rushed on the track and grabbed up the girl, and just cleared the track as the train went past. After it was all over I of course fainted, and when I came to the mother of the girl said she could not thank me enough. She wanted me to stay until her husband came home, but I escaped and came home.

BOYHOODS OF FAMOUS MEN.

This department contains each week the story of the early career of some celebrated American. Watch for these stories and read them, boys. They are of the most fascinating interest.

Those already published are: No. 1—Buffalo Bill; No. 2—Kit Carson; No. 3—Texas Jack; No. 4—Col. Daniel Boone; Nos. 5 and 6—David Crockett; No. 7—General Sam Houston; No. 8—Lewis Wetzel.

No. 9.—Lewis Wetzel, THE RENOWNED VIRGINIA RANGER AND SCOUT.

(Continued from Last Week.)

(In the account given last week of Lewis Wetzel's boyhood the particulars were told of his capture at an early age by the Indians. We left him in the hands of the Indians, and he was about to escape with his brother while the Indians were asleep.)

The two boys threaded their way between the sleeping Indians, guided by the glow of the hot ashes. Leaves crumpled under their feet, and they paused. No, no one was aroused. A bulky brave lay directly in their path.

This brave at first was a stumbling block to the two boys. He was broad, his arms were stretched out beside him; the slightest touch might wake him. Even as they stood there, the boys saw this brave struck on the face by a falling leaf, and he stirred uneasily, without, however, opening his eyes. They would not go back, they dared not go forward. Minutes seemed to elapse, and still they stood there, that sleeping form before them, their mind strained to the last point, and almost beyond reasoning. At last, with a pulling of himself together, and a stern setting of his upper teeth in his lower lip:

"Over," whispered Lewis Wetzel, and he lifted his brother sheer across the body, stumbling after him. There was yet an outer circle of Indians to be crossed. This was done boldly, and the free land lay before them, and they had but to choose a way. They went a few hundred yards, when their wounded feet made them pause and sit upon a log. Their shoes were gone.

"We cannot go," said the younger brother, with age's desperation.

"Not barefooted," replied Lewis; "we must have moccasins."

"Where will we get them?"

"You stay here, and I will get them," said Lewis, in that same tone of voice that must be obeyed.

He went back to the campfire, crossing sleeping body after sleeping body. He found the moccasins set before

the hot ashes to dry. He took two pairs, and came with them back to his brother.

"Here," he said, and knelt down in the darkness and fitted the moccasins upon the younger boy's feet.

They sat a little while longer on the log. Privation seemed to have dwarfed the energy even in so young children, and now that they saw a way out of captivity, the impulse to accept it seemed gone. At last the older boy aroused himself from the state of apathy they had fallen into.

"Now," he said, "don't move. Stay here till I come back."

"Where are you going?"

"We need protection, little Jacob."

"Where are you going? Why do you leave me here alone?"

"We must have a gun," he said, and disappeared in the darkness.

Again did he make his way back to the campfire. There was a musket lying beside one of the sleepers, and he stooped and picked it up, and prepared to move off. The sleeper stirred, and changed his position, so that his face turned up to the boy, gleaming like mahogany in the fire glow.

All apathy was gone from the boy then. What had come to him when he looked upon his dead father awoke again. Grasping the musket in his firm, brown hands, he looked down at the face. Here was one of his father's murderers! Perhaps this very man had struck the blow; perhaps it was he who had first fired the cabin; perhaps it was he who had worn the bearskin, and been watched for days by the boy who now looked upon him, holding him in his power. Might not the debt be paid now? Instinctively he raised the hammer of the musket. He lost sight of everything else around him but the man who lay in his power. That one face gleamed out at him, tempting him. A fierce longing came to him now—this

moment—to place that gun barrel close to that treacherous countenance and send a soul out to the dread unknown in memory of his father. Fear was gone from the boy now, and he stood there as reckless of life as he was ever after. The helpless Indian face tormented him; more and more he burned to wreak vengeance. He looked about him, and saw the many recumbent forms. Oh, to kill all! At least, he might die in the attempt.

Then he thought of his relying brother, waiting for him on the log in the black, dense wood.

"I have no time now," he said, slinging his weapon over his shoulder, and leaping over savage after savage with a step as light as the air, and, buoyed up, he came back to his brother. They set out immediately. Young as they were, they were sufficiently expert in tracing paths in the woods to find their way out. There was nothing but a charred ruin remaining of their home, but they were to make their way to their mother, and sisters and brothers.

Again the leaves crisped under their tread; farther and farther from the light of the fire they went.

"Remember," said Lewis Wetzel once, "there must be no more whimpering. If you whimper, I'll leave you here."

"Are you afraid of them?" asked his little brother, tremulously.

"It is because I want them to fear me that I mean to escape," was the reply.

So they went on, casting many a glance back through the ebon darkness, where the now dim light of the camp-fire was but as the glow of a candle they had often seen set in the window at home to guide them on their way from the hunting of a stray sheep or cow.

They had not been gone long when the Indian whose gun had been purloined awoke and discovered his loss. The fact of the escape was made known at once, and a pursuit instituted. The boys, going along, heard the Indians hard on their heels. Once they were almost overtaken, the Indians brushing closely past them.

"Down!" whispered Lewis, and he and his brother precipitated themselves into the sea of tall grass all around them, and which their pursuers beat with clubs without discovering the objects of their search. Long the boys laid there. Then the pursuing party passed on. "Up!" said Lewis Wetzel, and he and his brother fell in the rear of the searchers, and took up their travels again toward liberty.

Then they heard the Indians returning, cursing the guard and everybody concerned, for the loss of two captives who had not so much as left their scalps behind, but had stolen a gun and two pairs of moccasins—and only boys at that!

When the boys heard the angry voices returning, they precipitated themselves into the grass again, and a

second time escaped detection. Then, when the party had passed by they went feebly on again. They were then followed by two Indians on horseback, whom they eluded in the same manner. But these Indians drove their horses over the grass in a haphazard manner, and more than once the boys narrowly escaped death. But they did escape, and a day more found them beyond the reach of the braves.

They subsisted for days on roots, for though they had a gun they had no ammunition but the one load in it, and that Lewis refused to use on mere game, expecting more deadly use for it were they pursued a second time (which was not to be), and, after slow marches and strong endeavors to counteract the weakness stealing over them, they reached the river. In their sorry condition, and knowing that that river must be crossed before they could be near friends, the two boys made a raft, the implement for making which was a jack-knife, and their clothing torn in strips to tie the planks together when the withes from the trees failed them. In this raft they crossed the river, two boys made men by sorrow and wrong. When they reached the other side, Lewis was nearly exhausted from the bleeding of the wound in his breast.

"We must reach Wheeling," he said to his brother, and despite pain and weakness they again pushed onward, and slowly, but surely, they sighted Wheeling and friends.

From afar off they saw the place, and could discern the people moving about.

"But it is so far," pleaded the younger boy.

"You will go, as I tell you to," said the other.

Nearer and nearer they went to the place. Once out of the tall grass they could be seen, and a man saw them. They could see this man, his hand before his eyes, looking in their direction, and apparently hallooing to those about him; then the boys encountered grass again. When they emerged, they were within hailing distance; in a few minutes more they were in Wheeling.

There they were met by their mother and her friends. Freeing himself from the hysteric woman's embraces, Lewis Wetzel stood apart from them all.

"He is hurt in the breast," said a little girl—Berta Rosencranz.

"Never mind my hurt," he said to those anxious to attend to him. "I am thinking—of my father."

"He is crazed," said old Eberly, their one-time neighbor.

"He is not!" cried the little girl, stamping her foot, her eyes blazing.

For several minutes the boy stood thus apart, his mother bitterly weeping, her little family huddled up beside her, and the child Berta alone gazing on Lewis with understanding of the feeling swaying him. Sud-

denly throwing the Indian's musket from him, and raising his clinched hand, he cried:

"I swear to kill every Indian that crosses my path, so long as God lets me live!"

For a moment there was a stunned silence; the vehemence, the energy, and, moreover, a certain quality they had not expected from the lad, startled the rude sympathizers into a calm of wonder and awe. Then his mother broke out in wails, wringing her hands and declaring that her child was mad, and asking despairingly, "What shall I do? What shall I do?"

She grasped her other child, so recently recovered, and held convulsively to him.

"Lewis! Lewis!" she cried, "what does it all mean? What can it all mean? First your father, then you. I am wild! I am wild! I am afraid for the first time in my life, and I don't know what makes me afraid."

His little brother, whom he had brought into Wheeling, broke from his mother, and stood beside him.

"Your oath is mine!" he said, stoutly.

The girl Berta had thrown herself upon the ground weeping. The mother rent the air with her cries. How that oath was more than mere boyish bravado their after-life attested. The energy of youth kept alive their hatred, until it had become a characteristic defying age or calmer judgment to effect alteration or mitigation. Hurling at one fell swoop from childish inconsequence and carelessness, their childish natures forsook them; they were hardened men, with more than a man's ordinary responsibility. Young boys were men when they could do a man's work among the settlers, and what the endurance and trials of a bringing-up such as theirs had been inculcated in them made them like the savages whose childish rearing was not a whit wilder than that of these white boys.

A descendant of old neighbor Eberly told the present writer not long since that an old paper, found among some family books, and written by Eberly's hand, has this note:

"Lewis Wetzel a prime young ladd made oath to-day that hee wold kill every Injun as come on his path. A bad beginning for so young a lad. I spoke to him about it, and he ansered nothing. Hee seemed like to a grown man all to once. Hee had such an air about him that I could say nothing to dissuade him after a bitt. Hee has suffered much: hee never smiled all day, as children will when surrounded by other children and soon forgit their losses. And the strange part of it is that nobody thinks the oath out of the way nor odd for a ladd to make. It sounds odd, and it looks odd on paper. But looking at the ladd and seeing his harde face and harde eyes, it seemeth not so odd nor out of the way. The Lord be with us all, and rid us of our many troubles now clustering about these colonies that are no longer England's outposts, praise the Lord!"

To his last day, Wetzel kept his oath and killed every Indian he came across. He was himself finally killed by an Indian at the age of forty-four years.

Wetzel's Adventure.

Lewis Wetzel, when he had attained manhood, was known along the whole border as an "Indian fighter." He had attained the skill of reloading his rifle while running, and this saved his life more than once. With a full knowledge of

Indian tactics and stratagems, and the trail—which he could follow as readily as the Indians themselves—in all a perfect woodsman, he was a formidable foe. He was usually attired in deerskin leggins, moccasins made of tough buffalo hide of his own manufacture, a hunting shirt, and a coonskin cap, the tail of which hung over his shoulder.

He was armed with a knife similar to the ones that are now called "bowie," and a rifle, the barrel of which was four feet and a half long; the stock was studded with small silver nails.

One day, in the beautiful Indian summer, Wetzel was hunting in the forest, near the dark and bloody ground, in Kentucky. The Indians, after a short peace with the whites, had commenced their deviltries again. A party of Indians on the warpath had surprised a small settlement on the picturesque Ohio, and murdered nearly every one of its inhabitants; only a few escaped to tell the tale of suffering and woe, and one of these—a settler—met Wetzel, and told him of the massacre.

Wetzel, on hearing this—his blood burning to avenge the murdered settlers of the settlement—proceeded at a rapid pace in that direction. As he neared the scene of the massacre he advanced with more caution; he arrived there, and after a reconnoissance he proceeded to where a flourishing settlement had been, but which was now a mass of blackened ruins. The embers were still warm, which showed that the savages had not been gone long.

Wetzel became more cautious as he neared the place whence smoke proceeded—the want of caution might ruin everything. He looked to the priming of his rifle, and held it in readiness for use.

Ascending a small hill which overlooked the valley, he had a view of the Indian encampment. He counted twenty-eight warriors, and from the dress he knew them to be Shawnees. They were encamped for the night, and engaged in cooking their supper.

Wetzel had his plan in a moment. It was to fire at the savages, and then draw them after him; and, while he was running, reload his rifle and fire, until he had shot a number, knowing that the darkness, which was fast thickening around him, would favor his plan.

Sighting his rifle at one of the savages, who appeared to be the chief, he fired, and the savage fell, almost without a groan.

The Indians stood mute with surprise at the unexpected shot; but the dead body of their chief aroused them to a pitch of fury, and stepping up to their leader they bent over him to see if any life remained; but they were disappointed.

Uttering yells of revenge, they sprang in the direction of Wetzel, who was in full view on the top of the hill.

During the confusion his shot had made he reloaded his rifle, and taking aim at the foremost Indian, who was ascending the hill, he fired, and the savage fell.

Wetzel now ran down the opposite side of the hill, with the Indians in hot pursuit. He had a start of fifty yards. The Indians reached the top of the hill and seeing in which direction Wetzel had gone they bounded down in full pursuit.

Wetzel had, by the time the Indians reached the bottom of the hill, reloaded his rifle, which he fired at the pursuing Indians, and another fell to rise no more.

The Indians, on seeing their braves fall, shouted yells of revenge, and bounded after Wetzel, whom they kept track of by the repeated discharges of his rifle, which he loaded while running, a feat that, strange to say, few of the settlers could perform.

Wetzel fired again, and a savage fell. This continued until he (Wetzel) had killed six of the Indians, which, with the three he had killed while ascending the hill, made nine, including their chief.

The darkness covered the retreat of Wetzel, who disappeared in the forest. The Indians desisted from their pursuit, and went back with yells of rage. Wetzel, who, as soon as he had reached the forest, hid along the edge of the bushes, knowing that the Indians could not track him by his trail by night, and while there he saw them turn back. Wetzel shouted after them derisively:

"Yes, go! Go tell your warriors and squaws that a single man kept back a party of Indians on the warpath! Go tell your cowardly braves that nine of their warriors lie dead on the plains, a breakfast for the vultures!" and Wetzel, with a laugh, muttered: "They would follow Lew Wetzel," then disappeared in the forest. Wetzel had had his revenge.

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